

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated September 10, 2003. Claims 1 to 20 are pending. The Examiner's reconsideration of the rejections is respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks.

Claims 1-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gudjonsson et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,564,261. The Examiner stated essentially that Gudjonsson teaches all the claimed limitations of claims 1-20.

Claim 1 claims, *inter alia*, "displaying an abstract graphical display of the environment to the user." Claim 11 recites, *inter alia*, "displaying an abstract graphical display of the social proxy for a virtual environment and facilitating user interaction, wherein the abstract graphical display is a geometric shape." Claims 2 and 19 claim, *inter alia*, "user data is abstracted to provide the user proxy comprising an abstract graphical cue of a first parameter of the user data, wherein the abstract graphical cue moves through the graphical environment according to a second parameter of the user data to provide a second abstract graphical cue."

Gudjonsson teaches a contact list of users (see Figure 8 and col. 11, line 43 to col. 12, line 18) and methods for establishing a communication session between the users, wherein the communication session may be a text chat session, a voice chat session, or web conference (see col. 3, lines 13-18). Further, Gudjonsson illustrates how users send invitations to communication sessions (see Figures 1-6). Gudjonsson does not teach "displaying an abstract graphical display of the environment to the user," as claimed in claim 1. The contact list of Gudjonsson displays a literal list of user information, e.g., addresses or IDs, for establishing a communication session. Thus, the contact list of users of Gudjonsson is not an abstract graphical display of the

environment as claimed in claim 1. Further, the illustrations shown in Figures 1-6 of Gudjonsson are used for describing the invention. However, nowhere does Gudjonsson teach that these illustrations are shown to a user. Therefore, Gudjonsson does not teach “displaying an abstract graphical display of the environment to the user,” as claimed in claim 1. Therefore, Gudjonsson does not teach every limitation of claim 1.

Referring to claim 11, Gudjonsson teaches a contact list (see Figure 8 and col. 11, line 43 to col. 12, line 18). Gudjonsson does not teach “displaying an abstract graphical display of the social proxy for a virtual environment and facilitating user interaction, wherein the abstract graphical display is a geometric shape” as claimed in claim 11. The contact list of Gudjonsson is not an abstract graphical display of a social proxy, much less a geometric shape. The contact list of Gudjonsson is a one-dimensional directory of users. Gudjonsson does not teach a social proxy having a shape. Therefore, Gudjonsson fails to teach all the limitations of claim 11.

Referring to claims 2 and 19, Gudjonsson teaches a contact list including information such as addresses and IDs (see Figure 8 and col. 11, line 43 to col. 12, line 18). Gudjonsson does not teach user data “abstracted to provide the user proxy comprising an abstract graphical cue of a first parameter of the user data, wherein the abstract graphical cue moves through the graphical environment according to a second parameter of the user data to provide a second abstract graphical cue” as claimed in claims 2 and 19. Gudjonsson teaches a contact list including literal user information. The user information is not abstract. Therefore, Gudjonsson does not teach user data “abstracted to provide the user proxy comprising an abstract graphical cue,” essentially as claimed in claims 2 and 19. Therefore, Gudjonsson fails to teach all the limitations of claims 2 and 19.

Claims 2-10 depend from claim 1. Claims 12-18 depend from claim 11. Claim 20 depends from claim 19. The dependent claims are believed to be allowable to at least the reasons given for claims 1, 11, and 19, respectively. At least claim 18 is believed to be allowable for additional reasons.


Claim 18 claims, *inter alia*, “displaying a portion of the abstract graphical display of the social proxy based on a user’s access credentials.”

Referring to claim 18, Gudjonsson teaches global and private user information (see col. 28, lines 8-20). However, Gudjonsson does not teach displaying a portion of an abstract graphical display of the social proxy based on a user’s access credentials, as claimed in claim 18. Gudjonsson’s global and private information pertain to users and not to the environment. Further, the global and private information is literal, such as “strings” and “GroupID”, as shown in Figure 18(b) of Gudjonsson. The global and private information is not a part of a social proxy for a virtual environment (see claim 11). Therefore, Gudjonsson does not teach displaying a portion of an abstract graphical display of the social proxy based on a user’s access credentials, as claimed in claim 18.

The Examiner’s reconsideration of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Accordingly, the application, including claims 1 to 20, is believed to be allowable for at least the reasons stated. The Examiner's withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested. For the forgoing reasons, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Early and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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